1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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dormitories (*mbure*) and take no notice of their parent's admonitions; they go as they like. On the other hand, it was formerly considered a good thing to have bastards; if the father were a noble, so were his children.

Bastards are called "children of the path" (*luve ni wakolo*); they are looked down upon, whereas children of the house are respected. A Levuka man holds that bastards are bad characters; they don't obey; they are a bad breed (*kawa*).

An unmarried man is called *thauravou*, youth; a married man is described as *matua*, or old man. An unmarried girl is a "young woman" (*ngone alewa*). Maidens often wear tresses on one side of the head: the hair behind the ear is allowed to grow and is plaited into small cords. It is forbidden to cut off a maiden's tresses unless she appears pregnant. No one formerly would do so unless he knew something against her; now they do so in play. About twenty years ago every girl had tresses; if she had none she was not a virgin; now many are without it; tresses now appear unsightly. They used to be considered an ornament.

MARRIAGE

Cross-cousin marriage brings clans into the relation of cross cousins. Thus there is much intermarriage between Naivi and Vatuwangga. A man of Vatuwangga will be told, "Your sisters are in Vatuwangga, your wives in Naivi." Sometimes of old a man would take over some of his deceased father's wives. Thus Vuetasau took over one of Malani's wives.

Marriages are arranged by the family "turning the points (or bows) towards one another (*vakanamuani*)." Love matches and runaway matches, however, occur. Formerly women were precious, and marriages had to be discussed and arranged.

A marriage ceremony (*vakawati*) is now frequently described as *vakamau, from the Tongan fakamau, to judge, inquire, on account of the* questions put at the marriage ceremony according to European custom. I have not attended a wedding, so I must describe it from hearsay:

If a man and a woman like each other the man tells his clan and family (*yavusa*). It is their part "to go to fetch her," as the expression is, *lakovakina* [if *lakovaki* is used it is plain it concerns marriage]. They go to the woman; the man's father bears kava which is called "the thing to fetch her with" (*a ona i lakovi*). The woman comes out or stops inside and they inquire her mind. If she is willing they go away. Sometimes they appoint the date of the wedding if the other side also desires the match; otherwise her relatives do not assent; nothing is decided; the visitors go home, and the woman's people discuss whether or not the marriage will take place. If all agree to the marriage, the date is fixed. The man's people prepare a feast with intensity (*vakambimbi*); if the woman's side should be more energetic than the man's it looks bad. On the wedding day the woman's people make a feast on either a big or a small scale. While the feast is being prepared the couple dress (*teuteu*). A Lauan wedding is a cause of bashfulness because a man is so wrapped in clothes he cannot be seen. The women also put on plenty of painted bark cloth. The man goes to take off his clothes (*ululu*) at the woman's house; the woman goes to take hers off at the man's house. Then they go to church. After that they again dress. A painted bark cloth (*ngatu*) is spread from the woman's house to the man's to be their path. They go backwards and forwards two or three times, taking off their clothes each time and bearing painted bark cloth and whale's teeth: they take off their clothes five or six times. Then the man and the woman each retires to his house to wait for the evening

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meal. Sometime in the day the man's feast is taken over to the woman's house and the woman's to the man's. The man's feast is divided; a big feast consists of about ten of the smaller pigs; and a small feast called "the cutting off of the tresses" (*i koti ni tombe*), for which are selected two or three of the largest and best pigs. [Salesi says that the cutting off of the tresses is a big feast on the day after the first night.]

About five o'clock the woman's side takes her over to the man's house with some food; this food is distinct from the feast; it is the food for the "eating together" (*kana vata*). It is prepared by the women, whereas the feast is the men's work. A whale's tooth is brought forward for the woman as "the thing with which to lead her by the hand" (*i tumbetumbe*). Then the man, having dressed, sits beside the woman. His people bring whale's teeth and mats; these are called a "change of clothes" (*i vakamamatha*); it is so because the woman comes to a stranger. Another term is *i rengurengu*, kissing gift. The woman's side removes the gifts. Then they eat together. Should the man be of Vatuwangga and the woman of Naivi, there will be one tray (*i lalakai*) from either clan: one is set down before the man, the other before the woman, and they exchange.

The nuptial couch is covered with new mats provided by the man's side, who also hang up a large sheet of bark cloth (*ngatu*) behind it (7, p. 99). At one wedding in Wathiwathi they also hung a white band of bark cloth of the kind called *ngatutuki* all around the wall plate. Bark cloth known as Tongan is not used for weddings, only Fijian bark cloth (*ngatu vakaviti*), because Fijian bark cloth is noble.

The couple go to bed and an old woman, from the woman's side, sleeps with them. This custom is called *tonitoni*. For two or three nights the pair have no connection. To have connection on the very first night is said to be "lowborn ways" (*i vala vala vakaisi*). The father of the man will ask him whether they had connection (*veiyathovi*). If after the first night they have not done so the man's mother will awaken him and tell him "just to go to his wife that they may have news." It rests with the man whether he will or not; if they do not have connection his mother will awaken him again on the following night. They sleep there for four nights and know whether the girl is a virgin or not. Bark cloth, single pieces (*masi*), and sheets (*ngatu*) are laid on the bed; if they find on it no traces of virginity they almost disperse in shame. If they find blood they wrap it up and take it to the woman's side and show it to them. The people rejoice and dance and shout and beat the drum and say, "It is a good festival." The mat on which she slept is exposed and put out to sun where any one may see it. The man feels aggrieved if his wife is not a virgin and will remember it hereafter and be angry. It is worse if they find out she is not a virgin on the night of the marriage, than if they know beforehand, because it is a cause of distress and bitterness; the man will be angry with his wife about the least thing, however clever she may be.

During the four days the women bring boiled breakfast (*i takitaki*). The man's side make an oven for the evening meal and take it over to the woman's side. This for a noble wedding; for a wedding that took place in Wathiwathi they had no breakfast, only the evening meal.

After four nights they make an oven called the sea bathing (*i silisili i wailevu*); then the new woman (*alewa vou*) as the bride is called, goes to fish. She may bathe before the fourth day but this bathing on the fourth day is to make it free (*kena i vakatara*). They make a big feast and gifts (*i yau*) as "her change of clothes" (*i vakamamatha*) after bathing in the sea."

On a certain day the woman's side will take away the mats and bark cloth of the nuptial couch and provide others. These will be removed after an interval, it may be three days, by the man's side and replaced. Then the women's side will remove them; so that each side puts mats and bark cloth twice.

For a first marriage everything is done, nothing left out; but a second marriage is not thought so much of. I saw a wedding ceremony in Oneata

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marry his betrothed he may break the engagement (*vakandaroivola*). This necessitates the formal return of the property (*i lakovaki ni tchikina*) presented by the boy's clan to the girl's clan at the betrothal ceremony, or its equivalent. However, the food and property, of considerable value, which the girl's relatives have received from the boy's relatives from time to time are not returned with the original gift. 584

Frequently a man is reluctant to marry his childhood betrothed for, just as the tabu on a man's classificatory sisters (*weka*) tends to stimulate his sexual interest in them, so the accessibility of his cross cousins (*watchi*), especially his betrothed, tends to make them less desirable. However, he is loathe to break his engagement, for he knows that if he does so his father will be very angry at the loss of so much property. Hence a young man postpones his marriage as long as possible.

When he is between eighteen and twenty-five, his father and his clan, whose interests lie in the preservation of the sacred clan mana, force him to take decisive steps toward marriage. He either marries his childhood betrothed or breaks his engagement and finally becomes engaged to another girl. After he has talked to the girl (*veivosaki*) and gained her consent, he tells his father. If the elders of his clan approve of the match, the formal proposal (*lakovakina*) is made. When the elders of the girl's clan have approved the match, an engagement feast (*mangitchi ni vola*) is prepared and presented by the boy's relatives to those of the girl. When a match is not sanctioned by the clan elders, the young couple occasionally elope (*veitumbaitaki*) to the bush, where they stay until the anger of their relatives, especially of the boy's father, has abated. At first the couple is talked about in the village, but gossip soon dies away. When they return they are accepted as man and wife and a wedding feast may or may not be held. [582] [583]

MARRIAGE

Weddings in Lau differ greatly in size and importance. The quality and quantity of the feasts and gifts for the ceremonial affinal exchanges not only reflect but also determine the social status of the intermarrying clans, and there is much rivalry between them. However, in the long run, the boy's clan usually contributes the larger quantity of food and property (p. 95). The boy's clan sets the date for the ceremonies which are usually held in harvest season when food is abundant. 585

Preparations for the wedding rites are begun months ahead. The work is shared by the men of each of the intermarrying clans who are responsible for the marriage feasts and by the women, who provide the tapa and mats for the affinal exchanges of property.

I attended a wedding in Naivindamu, a small low ranking village of sailors

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585 and fishermen on Fulanga. The wedding was a very poor one because of the low rank and poverty of the intermarrying clans. Although pigs are usually the most essential wedding food none was killed for this marriage because pigs are scarce in Naivindamu. The wedding was somewhat irregular because the usual Christian wedding rites had been performed in the mission church six months before and the native ceremonies had been delayed until food for the feasts could be accumulated. The young couple had been living together in the house of the groom's father, and the bride was pregnant.

Early in the morning of the wedding day relatives of the bridegroom began to arrive from the other villages of Fulanga and from the island of Ongea. No close relatives of the bride were present because she came from Vatoa, an island about 50 miles south of Fulanga. While the food for the earth oven was being prepared and steamed by the young men (pl. 2, *A*), the male elders drank kava served by two young girls on the mound of a house under construction. Women and girls were busy in the kitchen houses, making wreaths, which they wore around their necks, and preparing greens and fish in coconut cream for the feast.

585 [431] 292 In the middle of the afternoon there was a ceremonial exchange of property (*rau mbutu*) between the two intermarrying clans. Out of the house used as the groom's headquarters came four girls, each bearing one corner of a large mat stretched at full length. Just behind them walked the groom, wrapped in an outer garment consisting of a large folded piece of Tongan tapa which extended from his arm pits to the ground. It was tied around his waist with a piece of pandanus, over which was knotted a single width of white tapa (*masi*). His body was oiled and around his neck he wore an elaborate wreath of leaves and hibiscus bark dyed burnt orange with *kura (Morinda citrifolia)*. His hair was bleached rust color and stood out about 9 cm. from his head. He wore two red and blue pompons of imported wool fastened just above his temples to a tapa head band.

585 The procession walked to the house which was being used as the bride's headquarters. Here the mat was placed on a piece of Tongan tapa spread in front of the entrance. The groom and his procession walked over it into the house. The groom left his ceremonial outer garment as a gift to the bride's relatives, and, wearing his kilt of Fijian tapa, he returned to his headquarters. Next, six girls, carrying an outstretched piece of Tongan tapa (3.5 by 6 meters), emerged from the bride's house. They were followed by the bride, dressed in an outer garment of Tongan tapa. She wore a wreath like the groom's but no ornament in her hair, which was sprinkled with powdered sandalwood. The bride and her attendants walked to the groom's headquarters, where the barkcloth was placed in front of the entrance. The procession walked across it and entered the groom's house. The bride left her ceremonial

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outer garment as a gift to the groom's relatives, and, wearing her kilt of Fijian tapa, she returned to her house.

The exchange of similar gifts was repeated five times, but after the first exchange the gifts were carried by three assistants plus groom or bride, the groom helping to carry his gifts, the bride hers.

The groom left six mats and six ceremonial outer garments of tapa at the bride's house; and she left one piece of Tongan barkcloth, five mats, and six ceremonial outer garments of barkcloth at his house. The gifts left at the groom's house had been provided by the bride's relatives, and, after the affinal exchange, were divided among the groom's relatives who had contributed to the collection of property for the relatives of the bride. The return gifts were divided according to the share each relative had contributed. The gifts presented to the bride's clan were later sent to Vatoa to be distributed among her relatives in the same way. The young couple received no share of the property. The mats presented by the groom were made on Fulanga, a mat-making island, but his tapa came from Namuka because no tapa is made on Fulanga. All the property presented by the girl came from Vatoa where both tapa and mats are made.

The ceremonial exchange was followed by the sharing of the wedding feast (*mangitchi ni vakawatchi* or *mangitchi ni vakamau*). Coconut leaves were spread on the ground about midway between the house of the groom and that of the bride, and on the leaves were placed breadfruit, pumpkin, manioc pudding steamed in the earth oven, and fish boiled with greens. The feast was surrounded by a circle of 50 empty baskets, one for each household attending the wedding. It was divided by five youths who were directed by an elder of the groom's clan. The filled baskets were carried to the households in the village and to the visiting canoes beached along the shore of the lagoon. The villagers ate quickly in casual household groups or departed for home with their full baskets.

In the evening the close relatives from both sides assembled in the groom's house for the "eating together" feast (*mangitchi ni kana vata*), which symbolized the marriage. Each side provided one basket of food. The sister of the bride took one mouthful of food from the bride's basket in her fingers and fed it to the groom. The sister of the groom took one mouthful of food from the groom's basket and fed it to the bride. Then the baskets of food were exchanged between the intermarrying clans. The married couple removed their outer barkcloth garments which were exchanged by their clans. The "eating together" feast ended the marriage ceremonies at Naivindamu.

Informants say, however, that usually on the same evening the relatives from both sides meet to drink kava and dance in the groom's house, a festive occasion called wedding night (*mbongi marau*). Late in the evening all the

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585 wedding guests leave the house except the young couple and three or four old female relatives of the bridegroom, including his mother, grandmother, and paternal aunt, who remain for the "virginity test" (*rarawa*). The women sleep in the lower part of the house and the bride and groom retire to the upper part which is frequently screened off by a curtain of Fijian barkcloth. Here a nuptial bed of mats and barkcloth has been laid by the groom's relatives. On it the bride's relatives have spread a piece of white barkcloth for the virginity test.

In the morning when the young couple leave the house the old women examine the barkcloth covering the bed. If stains are found they consider the bride to have been a virgin. Often, if the bride is not a virgin, the groom helps her secretly to secure the blood of a chicken or a pig or some red dye to produce the desired effect.

The old women announce the news to the village. They shout and dance and display the signs of virginity to the bride's relatives who are very proud. The village gongs are beaten and frequently the barkcloth is hung outside the house as a proof to all the villagers. The groom's relatives prepare a large feast for the bride, now called "new woman" (*alewa vou*), and her relatives. They kill a pig if possible, and the apertures of its body—the snout, eyes, ears and anus—are covered with banana leaves as a symbol of the bride's virginity. If the signs of virginity are not produced, the girl's relatives are ashamed. The groom's relatives are angry, and they prepare only a very small feast for the young couple.

If the bride is wearing "virgin locks" the ceremony called cutting the locks (*kotchi ni tombe*) is held on the day after the wedding. Both sides assemble [431] in the groom's house and the groom's clan presents mats and tapa to the clan of the bride. The gifts are piled up, the tapa on top. The bride sits on the pile and her mother-in-law singes the locks, or, if a pair of scissors is available, cuts them. They are usually discarded but occasionally the girl makes them into a necklace.

Another ceremony, called "the drying" (*i vaka mamatha*), takes place in the groom's house on the same day. The groom's relatives present property to the bride's relatives according to the ceremonial presentation pattern. Williams (*27*, vol. 1, p. 169) calls this ceremony "drying-of-the-tears" which the bride shed on leaving her home. Occasionally it is held on the evening of the wedding day after the *mangitchi ni kana vata*, the "eating together" feast.

[515] A ceremony called bath in the sea (*i silisili ki wai levu*) is held on the fourth day after the wedding. The bride takes a bath in the sea for the first time after her marriage. The natives say that if she bathes in the sea before the fourth day, water will get into her stomach and make her sick. The bride goes fishing with her relatives to procure sea food for the large feast which

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is provided and prepared by the groom's clan and is eaten by the whole village. 585●

An analysis of the marriage affinal exchange shows that the most elaborate rites mark the marriage of a virgin. The ceremonies, which last for four days, are summarized as follows:

First day:

1. ra mbutu, affinal exchange of property provided by both clans
2. mangitchi ni vakawatchi, large wedding feast provided by both clans
3. mangitchi ni kana vata, small "eating-together" feast provided by both clans
4. preparation of nuptial couch (bedding contributed by both clans)
5. rarawa, virginity test

Second day:

6. i vaka yandra, large feast for a virgin provided by the boy's clan
7. i vaka mamatha, the "drying" property provided by the boy's clan
8. kotchi ni tombe, cutting of the "virgin locks", property provided by the boy's clan.

Fourth day:

9. i silisili ki wai levu, bath in the sea, property and large feast provided by the boy's clan

Ceremonies 1, 2, 3, and 4 involve contributions from both the boy's and the girl's clans. Ceremonies 6, 7, 8, and 9 involve contributions from the boy's clan only. For the actual rites the boy's relatives contribute a larger amount of property and food to the girl's clan than they receive. For the betrothal rites all the property and food is presented by the boy's clan to the girl's clan. Hence marriage involves a reciprocal exchange of property in which the boy's clan pays by far the greater share.

For the first marriage of a non-virgin only ceremonies 1, 2, 3, and 7 are held, all in one day. The marriage involves a reciprocal exchange of property between the two clans in which the boy's clan contributes very little more than the girl's.

The marriage of a widow (*ndawai*) is even less elaborate. It consists of [587] ceremonies 2, 3, and 7 held on the first day.

It is clear, therefore, that the man's clan pays for virginity. If the bride is not a virgin the marriage involves a more nearly equal affinal exchange.

DEATH

When a person is near death his body is oiled, dressed in a clean kilt, and 763 moved to a new mat. An unconscious (*tandoka*) person is considered dead (*mate*) because his soul has left his body. He might be restored to life by [828] a medicine called *wai ni ndoka* or by the capture and return of his soul. After death is seen in his eyes, the body is placed on a large piece of Tongan tapa and covered with oiled tapa or a sheet of cloth.

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302 at least once a week, on Saturdays or Sundays before church. To conform with the Fijian mode the whole head of hair is shaped box-hedge fashion by singeing the upstanding ends with a burning brand. Imported scissors are used when available. Formerly men wore their hair longer than women, but in recent years many men have adopted a short, modified European coiffure, while most women have retained the old 764 mode. When a relative or a high chief dies, however, both men and women cut their hair close to the scalp and wear old mats around the waist. Hence most old people have [142] closely cropped hair. Grey hair is common among old people, but few bald headed persons are seen.

302 As a sign of virginity, which is highly prized at marriage ●585 in Lau, little girls of about ten years begin to twist a lock 177 of hair over one ear into twenty or more tiny two-ply strands. These "virgin locks" are allowed to grow and frequently they reach the shoulder. The rest of the hair is singed in the usual manner. Unless the girl becomes pregnant they are not cut until after the wedding night when a special feast is held. Some girls have broken away from the custom of wearing "virgin locks" and the most daring try to achieve a western bob by parting the hair in the middle and shingling it. The effect is lost, however, because the hair is so bushy that the part quickly disappears.

142 Although frizzly hair is the rule, many Lauans have wavy 144 hair due to Polynesian admixture. When cut according to the 302 Fijian mode, wavy hair becomes a problem for it will not stand on end. Untidy strands stick out in all directions or hang limp in defiance of all efforts to stiffen them. The unfortunate possessors of such hair, however, never give up their efforts to conform to the prevailing style.

142 The Lauans are a brown skinned people. In general they are lighter than the Fijians and darker than the Tongans but they vary in skin color from dark brown which is almost black to light café-au-lait. Light skins, like those of the

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858 enforced between brothers and sisters and parallel cousins of
864 opposite sex. Apparently many girls as well as boys masturbate,
and young mothers who are nursing babies—and hence
[838] forbidden sexual intercourse—occasionally do so also. According to the girls themselves, homosexual relationships among girls are not rare. These relationships usually begin by imitation of other girls before a girl's first menstruation. Practically all married women on Kambara say they have had such relationships before marriage, but afterwards they discontinued them without difficulty.

882 From the age of eleven, however, girls are usually more or
[585] less guarded by their parents, for virginity at marriage is prized. A girl's virginity is usually tested on her wedding night by her husband's female relatives, and the next morning the results of the test are made public. Fear of ridicule and the anger of her husband's relatives when she marries prevent some girls from accepting lovers before marriage, which usually does not take place until a girl is at least eighteen years old. Moreover, virgins are afraid of being deflorated. They are not sure just how the act is accomplished although they have witnessed sexual intercourse.

836 There is considerable difference in the degree of pre-marital
178 freedom found on the various islands in southern Lau. The most powerful force acting against pre-marital freedom is the virginity test. Although this custom is not observed at every wedding in Lau it is the rule on conservative islands like Fulanga, where standards of morality are relatively strict. The Lauans, however, try to keep the custom secret from western visitors because of fear of disapproval and ridicule. In general, the native emphasis on chastity has tended to break down in relation to the degree of Tongan and western influence. Among the islands visited, the greatest freedom was found on Mothe, which lies at the trade cross-roads for canoe traffic in southern Lau, and which was formerly the point of departure of sailing canoes to Tonga.

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occasionally run away and live together in the bush. At the end of our stay in Tokalau, canoes arrived from Mothe to take a young woman of the village to Mothe to be married. In the morning the girl was nowhere to be found, and it was discovered that she had run away to the bush with a young man. The Mothe canoes had to return without the bride. The pair usually stay away until the anger of their relatives and especially of the young man's father has somewhat abated. At first they are berated in the village, but gossip soon dies away. When the pair return to the village they are accepted as man and wife. A wedding feast may or may not be held.

Marriages differ in size and importance according to the status of the inter-marrying clans. The marriage feasts and ceremonial gifts not only reflect but also determine the social status of the participating clans, who try to outdo each other in the quantity and splendor of their gifts. It is, however the young man's clan which in the long run contributes the larger quantity of food and property. The man's clan sets the date for the ceremonies, which are usually held in harvest season when food is readily available.

The marriage of a couple belonging to low ranking clans is a small affair, but that of a couple belonging to clans of high social standing involves the exchange of large amounts of property and the consumption of quantities of food. Preparations for the wedding feasts and ceremonies are begun months ahead by both the youth's and the girl's relatives. The work is shared by the men, who are responsible for the garden produce contributed by both sides for the marriage feasts, and by the women, who provide the barkcloth and mats for the affinal exchanges. An important wedding is discussed far and wide, and is attended by relatives from many villages and islands. The marriage of a high chief at Lakemba is a historic event, and a drain on the economic resources of the whole group. It is attended by representatives

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of the leading clans of Lau who present food and property from every village in the group.

I attended a wedding in Naivindamu (pronounced Nai-vi-en-dá-mu), a small Fulangan village of sailors and fishermen, and was told that the wedding was a very poor one, chiefly due to the low rank and poverty of the intermarrying clans. It was also somewhat irregular, because none of the close relatives of the bride, who came from Vatoa, a small island about 48 miles south of Fulanga, were present, and because the bride was pregnant. The usual Christian marriage ceremony in the mission church had been performed six months before, and the young couple had been living together in the house of the groom's father, but the native wedding rites had been delayed until sufficient food and property could be accumulated. Usually in Lau a Christian marriage ceremony takes place on the day of the wedding before the native rites.

Three days before the wedding, preparations for the feast began in the village, and a large sailing canoe set out for Namuka to collect kava, tobacco, yams, and barkcloth from relatives of the young man, to supplement deficiencies in the Fulanga supplies. The day before the ceremonies the women of the village went on a large fishing expedition. Pigs are usually the most essential wedding food, and the social standing of a clan depends on the number of pigs killed for the occasion, but pigs are scarce in Naivindamu and none were killed for this wedding.

Early in the morning of the wedding day, relatives began to arrive from the other villages on Fulanga. A few came by canoes from the neighboring island of Ongea. A group of men sat smoking and drinking kava in a lively circle on the mound of a house under construction. A large mat sail, leaning against the house framework, protected the house mound from the sun. Some old men were wrapping balls of sweet pudding made of breadfruit in leaf bags. Two of the island belles were making and serving kava in a six-legged

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554 wooden bowl, and a few girls sat on the fringe of the circle
585 but did not drink.
614 The men were joking and telling stories. One told a yarn
[164] about two men present who had both legs grotesquely swollen by elephantiasis. As healthy young men these two had left Fulanga to seek wives on Namuka, an island famed for its beautiful girls. They were absent nine years, but when finally they returned, instead of lovely young brides they brought home swollen legs from Namuka! This story was greeted with roars of laughter in which the two men joined. One of them, however, immediately retaliated with a long tale of the exploits of his ancestors, to which the others listened politely.

[252] Most of the women and girls were busy in the kitchen houses, steaming edible greens which they boiled with fish in coconut cream for the feast. They made wreaths of leaves, flowers, and strips of hibiscus bark to wear around their necks, and stuck sprays of sweet smelling flowers over their ears. The young men were busy making a pudding of the
252 starch of a tuber (*Yacca pinnatifida*). They stirred red-hot
585 stones in a wooden bowl filled with the starch mixed with water. Toward noon, two large earth ovens, full of ripe breadfruit, sliced pumpkin and tapioca pudding were covered with green leaves and earth. Two hours later the ovens were opened and the food was removed and placed in baskets until its distribution after the ceremonial exchange of property.

585 The bride and groom took no part in these festivities. The
614 bride, looking none too happy, sat with a group of women in the house of the groom's father which was her headquarters. If her father had been living in the village his house would have been used. The groom, looking dull and bored, stayed in or near his headquarters on the other side of the village. In the middle of the afternoon when the ceremonial exchange of property (called *solevu*) between the two inter-marrying

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585 [614] clans took place, the bride and groom became the central figures.

Out of the house used as the groom's headquarters came four girls, each bearing one corner of a large mat stretched at full length. Just behind them walked a person I took to be the bride, wearing yards and yards of Tongan barkcloth,[15] extending from the armpits almost to the ground and tied around the waist with a piece of pandanus. This festively clad person turned out to be the groom, whom I had failed to recognize in ceremonial attire. His body was oiled, and around his neck he wore an elaborate wreath of leaves and hibiscus bark dyed burnt-orange (with *Morinda citrifolia*). His upstanding hair was bleached rust color. He wore a head ornament consisting of two red and blue pompoms of imported wool, fastened just above the temples to a barkcloth headband.

The procession walked to the bride's house where the mat was placed on a piece of Tongan barkcloth in front of the entrance. The procession walked over it into the house. There the groom left his outer garment as a gift to the bride's relatives, and returned in his *lavalava* of Fijian barkcloth[16] to his headquarters.

Next six girls, carrying an outstretched piece of Tongan barkcloth, emerged from the bride's house. They were followed by the bride, resplendently dressed in a voluminous outer garment of Tongan barkcloth like the groom's. She wore a wreath like his but no ornament in her hair, which was sprinkled with fragrant, powdered sandalwood. The bride and her attendants walked to the groom's headquarters where the barkcloth was placed in front of the entrance. The procession walked over it into the house. In the groom's

[287] [531] [15] Barkcloth made by the Tongan method of joining strips of bark by pasting them together to form long sheets, and ornamented by rubbing the sheets with dye over raised designs.

[16] Barkcloth made by the Fijian method of joining strips of bark by beating together their overlapping edges and ornamented with a stencil.

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house the bride left her outer garment as a gift to the groom's relatives, and returned in her under-garment, a *lavalava* of Fijian barkcloth, to her house. The exchange of similar gifts was repeated five times. Afterwards the gifts received by the groom were divided among his relatives. Those received by the bride were sent to her relatives in Vatoa. The young couple received no share of the wedding presents.

The ceremonial exchange was followed by the important task of sharing the wedding feast. Coconut leaves were spread on the ground about midway between the headquarters of the groom and that of the bride, and the food was placed on these leaves. It was surrounded by a circle of 50 empty baskets, one for each household attending the wedding. The food was then divided by five youths under the direction of the oldest man of the groom's clan. The filled baskets were carried to the households in the village and to the visiting canoes beached along the shore of the lagoon. The villagers ate quickly in casual household groups and most of the visitors, carrying their shares of the feast, departed for home.

In the evening the near relatives from both sides assembled in the groom's headquarters for the "eating together" feast. This feast symbolizes the marriage. Each side provides one basket of food. The bride and groom are dressed in outer ceremonial garments of barkcloth. The sister of the girl takes one mouthful of food from the girl's basket in her fingers and feeds it to the young man. Then the sister of the man takes one mouthful of food from the man's basket and feeds it to the girl. The baskets of food are exchanged between the inter-marrying clans. The married couple remove their outer barkcloth garments. That worn by the groom is given to the girl's side, while that worn by the girl is given to the groom's side. The "eating together" feast ended the wedding ceremonies at Naivindamu.

Usually, however, after the "eating together" feast a "happy night" is held in the house of the groom. The young people

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585 exchange native dances and the old people drink kava. Late in the evening all the guests leave the house except the young couple and frequently three or four old female relatives of the bridegroom, including his mother, grandmother, and paternal aunt who remain for the "virginity test". They sleep in the house with the young couple to find out whether or not the bride is a virgin.

If the results of the test are satisfactory the old women announce the glad news to the village by shouting and dancing, and the village drums are beaten. To celebrate the occasion a large feast is prepared by the young man's relatives. A pig is killed and the body openings such as the snout, eyes, ears, and anus are frequently covered with banana leaves as a symbol of virginity. If the signs of virginity are not produced the groom's relatives are angry and the girl's relatives are very much ashamed. In this case only a very small feast is prepared by the man's side.

585 302 [614] [606] If the girl is wearing "virgin locks" they are cut on the day after the wedding. Both clans assemble in the young man's house where his clan presents mats and barkcloth to the girl's clan. The mats are piled and the barkcloth is placed on top. The bride sits on the pile and her mother-in-law singes the locks, or cuts them if a pair of scissors is available. The hair is usually thrown away, but occasionally the girl makes it into a necklace.

585 Another ceremony takes place in the man's house on the day after the wedding. The man's relatives present property to the girl's relatives. Every morning for four days the relatives of the groom prepare a small breakfast feast for the [515] young couple. The ritual washing is held for the bride on the fourth day after the wedding. The bride takes a bath in the sea for the first time since her wedding. The natives say that if she bathes in the sea before the fourth day, water will get into her stomach and make her sick. The bride goes fishing with her relatives to secure sea-food for the large

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VIRGIN LOCKS

As a sign of virginity a lock of hair over one ear is twisted into many tiny cords which are not cut until after the wedding night.

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585 feast which is provided and prepared by the groom's clan on the same day and is eaten by the whole village. This ends the [885] wedding rites. They mark the acceptance of both the young man and the young woman as full adult members of the community.

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556 centralization of wealth and brings about its continual redis-
431 tribution. The underlying principle is clearly expressed in the native soliciting system. Under the soliciting system a man loses face if he refuses to give up property solicited by a relative. However, the recipient is under obligation to the donor, who has the right to retaliate by soliciting something of greater value from him at some future time. Hence the institution is really a system of reciprocal gift exchange. One day I gave a necklace of bright green beads to one of the girls in Tokalau. The next day I noticed another Tokalau girl wearing it. In the course of time the green necklace traveled from neck to neck through the village, and when I visited Undu at the other end of the island there it was ornamenting one of the Undu belles.

556 The native soliciting system does not differ in principle
431 from other types of exchange in Lau such as the *solevu*, which
585 has been described in connection with a Lauan wedding. The *solevu* is a competitive type of ceremonial gift exchange between related groups. As we have seen, marriage in Lau initiates a series of *solevus* between the inter-marrying clans. Inter-island trade on a large scale is carried on mainly through *solevus* between villages. The *solevu* ceremonial pattern varies in detail, but always involves the display of property belonging to the rival groups by means of processions, piling up on the village ceremonial ground and the ceremonial presentation of property by each donor group, acceptance by the recipients, feasting, and dancing. Whale's teeth, mats, tapa, food, woodwork, canoes, and sennit are the most important articles of exchange. Tribute is also presented by means of the *solevu* at the high chief's court on important occasions such as the marriage or death of the chief.

435 Under the old native system there was no definite standard
436 by which the relative value of objects of exchange could be measured. True money was absent. The most valued object in Lau was, and still is, the beautiful polished ivory tooth